



September 9, 2005

West Warwick pair sentenced for robbery plot

A federal judge today sentenced **King L. Chan** and **George O'Neill**, both of West Warwick, to federal prison for planning to commit a robbery at a firearms dealer in West Warwick and possessing a sawed-off shotgun.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentences, which Chief U.S. District Court Judge Ernest C. Torres imposed in U.S. District Court, Providence. Judge Torres sentenced Chan to 42 months in prison and O'Neill to 24 months.

In June, Chan and O'Neill pleaded guilty to conspiracy to steal firearms from a licensed dealer and possessing a sawed-off shotgun. At their plea hearings, Assistant U.S. Attorney Lee H. Vilker said that the government could prove that Chan, with help from O'Neill, generated detailed plans to commit a robbery at a West Warwick gun shop, after which they would commit a bank robbery in Massachusetts.

On February 9, West Warwick and Coventry detectives observed Chan conduct surveillance at Valley Firearms on Main Street in West Warwick.

Acting on a state-authorized warrant, West Warwick Police searched Chan's house at 226 Providence Street on February 10. They found a duffle bag containing a sawed-off shotgun and detailed plans for various robberies, including one at Valley Firearms and another at the Sovereign Bank in Lynnfield, Massachusetts. The latter included a plan to take women hostage and use them as human shields.

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Police arrested Chan as they executed the search warrant. At first, he admitted that he planned the Valley Firearms robbery to get “start-up money” for the bank robbery. He later claimed that the plans were merely storylines for a book but he backed off that claim when he pleaded guilty.

O’Neill turned himself in to West Warwick Police on February 11. He admitted participating in the robbery scheme and helping Chan cut down a shotgun.

Chan, 24, of 226 Providence Street, West Warwick, has been detained at the Wyatt Federal Detention Center since being charged federally in February. O’Neill, 20, of 219 Providence Street, had been free on bond, but has been detained since violating the terms of his release on August 18.

The **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, West Warwick Police** and **Coventry Police** conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Lee H. Vilker prosecuted the case.